

The Will Of The Damned: Glimmers Of Darkness

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Title: The Will of the Damned: Glimmers of Darkness Category: Drama
Summary: The story I thought I'd never write: my non-happy, real universe, version of the story following TPM. It goes with my "Will of the Force" Trilogy, so you might want to read them first. Padawan Place also fits in. Obi-Wan Kenobi decides to take Anakin as a Padawan despite a feeling that he should interfere and refuse the Council's concession. Ten years later, Jedi Anakin Skywalker, having recently completed his trials, visits his best friend Queen Amidala to celebrate his elevation. Rating: PG Disclaimer: I am making no money and Uncle George owns Star Wars. This story is written for fun.
*** THE WILL OF THE DAMNED

GLIMMERS OF DARKNESS

***** Obi-Wan was not going to tell the boy the truth. The young Jedi stood in the shadows, watching the unsuspecting boy playing nearby. Obi-Wan was only vaguely aware of Theed's lights playing off of his pale features. "They all sense it, why can't you?" The scene with Qui-Gon played continually before his eyes. Obi-Wan felt a great disturbance in the Force. He knew that he was on the threshold of something important that could involve the fate of the galaxy. It's only a boy, he thought "They all sense it, why can't you?" he had told Qui-Gon. Master Yoda saw it. Why then did the Council give in? Out of pity? Emotions? Obi-Wan shuddered a little. Was the Council weak? He banished the thought, for the possibility was too disconcerting. "They all sense it, why can't you?" I feel it. I see it. Obi-Wan was trying desperately not to think disloyal thoughts about his late master. He shuddered again. Qui-Gon had been like a father. If Qui-Gon was wrong about this, could he have been wrong about everything else he taught? Would Obi-Wan's foundations be shaken like that? He shook his head. No, he was too frightened to go there. Instead of facing the possible truth head-on, it was easier to

just go with what he had told Yoda. He had given Qui-Gon his word. That decided it, and the responsibility left him.

He sighed with relief. He felt a whispering then. A confirmation? A feeling . . .

Qui-Gon had always told him to trust his feelings. So Obi-Wan focused on the living Force, not yet strong enough to discern that the diabolical can disguise itself as the Light. "My focus creates my reality," Obi-Wan whispered his master's instructions. My focus, my focus.

"Come, Anakin," Obi-Wan called out, "It's time for you to get your hair-cut."

"Yes, Master," Anakin obediently replied, but inside he was thinking how he could show Obi-Wan how he could be a Jedi.

He would show the Council. He would show them all . . .

Queen Amidala of Naboo showed no emotion as she sat intent on hearing the next question from the holographic image:

"May a good leader break a Republic's trust?"

"No."

"Even though good result?"

Amidala paused, "Even if good could result," she repeated. "As I understand it, Supreme Chancellor, there are two things from which a Republic wishes to defend itself: the tyranny of a minority, to be sure, but no less the tyranny of a majority. But . . . perhaps in a crisis it COULD be possible. But then only in an emergency," she quickly added. "Yes, as in the crisis with the Trade Federation?"

"Exactly," the Queen replied. "We needed to go above the law for that."

"Marvelous, Your Majesty. I am pleased that we agree on this matter."

"As I am, Chancellor," Amidala replied. "How happy I am that I may trust you with the burdens we face. You will act in the Republic's interests. I have a good feeling about the future."

"And I enjoy such conversations with you. Now, to more mundane tasks . . . May I discuss the latest bill with you? It seems that once again the Trade Federation is attempting . . ."

It was usually difficult to see the teenager under the tinkling head-dress and low voice, but once Amidala was alone, and wiped the make-up from her face, she changed. Her stretch pants, and bright red sweater, hanging loosely from her tiny frame showed the fifteen year-old girl, who she became only infrequently.

Amidala tucked her feet under her as she sat on her couch, closing her eyes. A handmaiden, unbidden, came with a hot drink which she took gratefully.

The door to her chambers opened and Sabe, her loyal body-guard and decoy, entered. "Sorry to disturb you, your Highness, but there is a message for you."

Amidala stifled a groan and asked, "Can it wait?"

"It can, Queen, but I believe that you will not find this message taxing. It is from Jedi Obi-Wan Kenobi. . ."

TEN YEARS LATER

Anakin and Amidala were having the time of their lives. They were speeding over the forests of Naboo in Obi-Wan's shuttle. Anakin was showing off for his friend. The pair had cut out of the party early. Nobody noticed, for Palpatine was the real attraction at Theed palace, not the young Jedi. Nineteen-years old and passed the trials with flying colors! One of the youngest Jedi ever. Even Master Yoda was impressed with Jedi Skywalker's powers.

Anakin nearly crash landed the shuttle into Theed hangar. He and Amidala tripped out, bickering good-naturedly about his dare-devil flying.

Giggling, they tiptoed through the courtyard, hoping nobody would catch them out.

"Wait!" Anakin whispered. "What?"

"Obi-Wan's out here."

"Checking on your curfew?" Amidala asked with a raised eyebrow.

"Very funny," Anakin answered drily, listening. "He's over by the waterfall. Let's surprise him."

Obi-Wan listened to the gurgling of the waterfall. The view was breathtaking and standing here right on the edge was like standing before Paradise. The Jedi had taken off his cloak and was leaning far out over the edge, easily keeping his balance. He was thinking that . . .

He turned and he saw Anakin and Amidala sneaking up on him.

"See!" Amidala complained, "I told you it wouldn't work. You Jedi are no fun!"

Obi-Wan laughed, "It's good to see you too, Ami." He hugged his friend. Amidala stood between the Jedi, linking her arms with theirs.

They walked through the woods, laughing, making the most of the moment. They all sensed that this was the last time they would be together for several months.

Master?

You can call me Obi-Wan now!

OK. Obi-Wan, could you do me a favor?

Sure

Could you get lost?

Hey, you two came and got me!

Yeah, well, but I didn't think you'd stay this long

Excuse me!

Amidala cut in, "Could you PLEASE tell me what on Naboo you two are talking about? It's rather rude you know."

"You're right, Ami," Obi-Wan said. "Sorry," he kissed her forehead. "Goodnight. Anakin wants me to get lost so he can make the moves on you!"

Thanks a lot buddy!

A grin *You're welcome*

Amidala laughed nervously, "You two!" It was no secret that she and Anakin were very close, best friends even. But there was the gap in their ages, and he just a newly created knight. . .

"Just ignore him" Anakin grumbled.

They walked together where the moonlight glimmered over the streams. Amidala took off her shoes and went wading. Anakin lay on the grass watching her, leaning casually on his elbows as they chatted. Their public lives were so serious that when they were alone together, it was always a relief to be natural.

Amidala finally splashed to shore, and faster than a blink, Anakin was in front of her. She had to look up to see his face.

"So, is this how a Jedi 'makes the moves?'" She teased.

Anakin's face was serious. "Ami, I . . ."

"Anakin," Amidala interrupted, "joking aside. We can't! You know it. Maybe later some other time. You have your vocation to look to, and you are too young to know if you will choose the celebrate state." A pause, "And I am older than you."

"Like I don't know that! How many times in one day can you say it!"

"Anakin . . ."

He stopped her words with a kiss. Their first kiss, chaste, innocent. He pulled her close. "Let's make a deal," He whispered against her hair, "We get to kiss twice everytime we see each other: when we say hello and goodbye. We'll keep this up until we're ready to get serious."

"You certainly have mastered the Jedi virtue of diplomacy and compromise."

"I learned from one of the best."

"But I'll only see you about once a year," Amidala smiled.

"Then let's make it count!" Anakin brought his lips to hers again.

"Hey, don't waste it!" she laughed and pulled back.

"OK," Anakin answered, "let's start over. I get two kisses starting now."

"Ani, this is ridiculous. We're acting like a pair of adolescents," she was laughing hard now. "Maybe we can find some of your Jedi friends for a game of spin the bottle! As if we were. . ." and the shadows were upon them.

Like a streak of lightning Anakin's light saber was out. Within seconds, Obi-Wan was by his side. Amidala was then treated to the specatacle of seeing the Master and his former Padawan fighting in sync, coordinating their moves with each other like a well choreographed dance.

Before she had time to cry out, it was over. In the brief instant before they died, Obi-Wan was able to glean from the attackers the knowledge that they were there to harm the Queen.

Anakin grabbed Amidala's arm, "Let's go now!" he said as Obi-Wan signalled Captain Panaka.

"We're coming," Panaka answered curtly. "Negative," Obi-Wan replied, "we're getting the Queen out on my shuttle. We'll meet you at her summer residence."

"Very well," Panaka replied.

The Queen's quarters at her summer residence were swarming with security guards. Amidala was on her portable throne, her attention directed to the men before her. "The Chancellor will meet you here shortly," Panaka said.

"That is a comfort, Captain. Do you have any clue as to who was behind this attempt on my life?"

"It is too early to tell."

"What do you say, Obi-Wan?" Amidala asked him.

"I don't know. But of this I am certain: their intent was to kill you."

"Have you any idea why?" Panaka asked Amidala.

"Assassination attempts are not uncommon for a monarch," Amidala replied in her deep, Queen's voice, "there are many people who could wish me dead. The King I defeated in the elections, members of the Trade Federation, or someone I have not even heard of, in a plot of which I am at present unaware."

Anakin fought the temptation to interrupt and demand that Amidala stay hidden until she this matter was cleared up. But his Jedi training stopped him. However, it took a great deal of effort to keep his face impassive and his hands folded.

Amidala sat on a couch in the Queen's office of her summer residence. The Chancellor was walking evenly before her.

"But you were careless, my Queen," Palpatine's face showed fatherly concern.

"I know." Amidala had been ashamed of herself from the moment the attackers came upon her.

"I understand, my dear, that you want to occasionally be as other young people are, but . . ."

"I gave up that right when I became Queen."

"As you say, your Majesty." Sighing he stopped in front of her. "I am sorry if I sound harsh. I am only speaking as I am because your safety is something that I hold very close to my heart."

"I am grateful for your concern, Chancellor. Many politicians do not care as you do."

"I thank you for the compliment. And my dear, I would suggest that from now on you must be watched. At all times."

The Queen nodded in agreement. *****

Amidala, draped in a red velvet gown, sat alone in her quarters. They were quite impressive, though she only used them for vacations. Not only did they have the most elegant furniture and decorations, but a small, indoor swimming pool glimmered in the center.

She was startled by the entrance of Obi-Wan and Anakin.

"We have been searching the area, Ami. Frightful though the situation is, I do not believe you are in danger."

"I put myself into that danger by leaving the palace so late at night," Amidala said forlornly.

Obi-Wan nodded and fought the feelings of guilt. Anakin, too, looked ashamed. As Jedi, they should have known better than to consort with

the Queen in a manner where she would be put in danger.

None of the friends spoke their thoughts. Amidala cleared her throat.
"Thank you both for all your help. "

The Jedi nodded.

Obi-Wan?

You don't even have to say it, I'm already on my way out

"Ami," Obi-Wan said, "there are matters to which I must attend. I will see you two later for refreshments." He quickly exited.

The moment the Jedi swept from the room Anakin went over to his friend and gripped her in his arms, needing to bend down to embrace her much shorter form.

She sat down on her sofa, he beside her, holding both her hands

"It was my fault," Anakin said.

"Anakin, that's ridiculous. I'm a grown woman and can make my own decisions. It was a bad one. I'll admit that and then I'll go on. If I obsessed about every past mistake, I'd go crazy!" "I know, I know . . ." How often had he struggled with the same temptation?

"Enough of this," Anakin muttered looking at the pool glimmering in the room, "I want to dip my feet." He turned his back and started taking off his pants entirely.

"Ani!"

"What?" he said, oh so innocently, pleased to see her face become less tense.

"You're wicked!" She knew it was some sort of childish thing men always had to do around girls to shock them.

"A regular barbarian," he replied, smiling as he leaned over as though to roll up his pants, but instead threw Amidala, velvet and all, into the pool.

"Where's Amidala?" Obi-Wan asked Anakin as he entered his quarters.

"Drying off. She took quite a swim."

Obi-Wan's face was sober. "Her attackers will be found. It would be a comfort to know for certain the motivation for the attack, but, at the risk of sounding careless, I would conclude that this attack is not any different than other routine attempts on sovereigns' lives."

"I wish they'd choose another target," Anakin replied and Obi-Wan felt his fear.

"Be mindful, friend."

"I know," Anakin nearly snapped, "I know."

Amidala tried not to cry out as her hair was twisted into its formal style. The door to her quarters opened with a swish.

Without looking, Amidala told Obi-Wan, "You may speak, do not let my handmaiden's concern you."

"No news on your attempted assassins."

"As I supposed. Perhaps we will never know."

Obi-Wan advised, "You cannot allow herself free movement. That is a responsibility all rulers must face." Amidala nodded. Palpatine had told her the same thing.

"This matter is for your security force, not the Jedi. The Council has informed me that I am to go on a diplomatic mission with Jedi Jade to Alderaan. It seems that there is an internal matter which Bail Antilles wishes for me to mediate."

"Alderaan! I'm jealous! And how is Anabelle? I haven't been able to speak with her in ages!"

"She is mired in all the wedding arrangements. Even Jedi marriages have a lot of worldly planning involved."

"Tell her I sympathize."

"Certainly."

Amidala's hair was done. "That will be all," she dismissed her handmaidens. She turned to Obi-Wan, "Once again, we take different paths, dear friend."

He leaned over and kissed her on the forehead, "'Dear friend' you will always be. If you ever need me . . ."

"I know that I can depend on you," Amidala finished for him. Obi-Wan nodded. With a bow, he lifted his hood over his head and left the room.

"A message from Supreme Chancellor Palpatine," a handmaiden informed Amidala.

"Chancellor," Amidala addressed him from her throne room, in her red dress, full make-up, "And how go the negotiations?"

"Very well. They are sending Jedi ambassadors to help."

"Yes, you are fortunate. Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anabelle Jade are coming."

"How pleasant! Time to renew old acquaintances, as well as be certain

that the best are coming to our aid." "Indeed. I am happy that your influence is spreading. Corruption seems to melt away in the presence of your congenial personality."

"Your Majesty is flattering."

"Not at all. I am also pleased that Jedi Skywalker will be working with you. Our goals to bring peace and harmony into the Republic are within our reach."

"Yes, young Queen. I will be sure to keep an eye on Young Skywalker."

Amidala took off the last piece of jewelry by herself, dismissed her handmaidens, and sat in front of her vanity, brushing her hair. It was in these nights alone, after a difficult day, that she felt Anakin's absence most keenly. It was always he with whom she wished to relax, discuss the day's events, with whom she could merely sit on her couch and talk.

She pressed a buzzer by her vanity. "Yes," a voice immediately replied.

"I would like to send a transmission to Alderaan, personal."

"And to whom?"

"Anakin Skywalker."

Anakin was dangling his feet in the clear pools of Alderaan. He was trying not to think of Amidala. It would be quite a while before he could see her and he could not be distracted from his work as a Jedi. And what a life he had with a mentor in Palpatine and two loyal friends! That's more than most men get in a life-time. He was grateful to the Force for all that he had been given.

And this was just the beginning.

"A personal message, Jedi Skywalker"

"Personal?"

Anakin smiled and pushed on the screen. "Ami!" His voice lit up and a grin spread across his handsome face. So much for getting her out of his thoughts! Then Anakin sensed what she wanted and took it as great compliment. She wished to vent. Women only did so to people with whom they felt close.

He gave her a leading question, "So, what have you been up to?"

"You don't know the half of it! Can I begin to tell you how this day straight from the pits has begun . . . ?"

"Go right ahead, sweetheart!" Anakin grinned and sat down to talk to his best friend.

Palpatine sat smugly in his dimly-lit room, thinking over the events of the past few days. It seemed that his plan to build some fear had worked, yet . . . Palpatine wished that it was Qui-Gon with whom he was dealing. Again, he wished that Darth Maul had not killed him. How he needed that Jedi's weakness in his plans now! Qui-Gon's pride in his own judgment had clouded his reason, made him lose objectivity, and thereby unity with the Council. Palpatine wanted that. The Jedi out alone, confused, mistrustful of each other. A man must divide, before he can conquer. And how Palpatine wanted to divide and conquer the Jedi. The only way he saw to do so was to weaken the Council.

Obi-Wan was promising. He had a good deal of misguided compassion which frequently controlled his actions. Much like his former Master. Palpatine was counting on that and his covert willingness to defy the Council if he felt it was necessary.

Another lesson learned from Qui-Gon.

Palpatine then thought of he who was most promising: Young Skywalker. It was this Jedi, so strong in the Force, who would be a powerful ally in building his Empire. Little by little, Palpatine would chip away the good that was in the boy, damage his discernment, and then bring him over to the Dark Side. All with the aid of his apprentice Anabelle Jade. Of course, Anabelle did not know that Anakin's seduction to the Dark Side was for purposes other than building the Empire. She had no clue that her true task would involve grooming the young Jedi to take her place.

Palpatine had only one regret: that the attempt on Queen Amidala's life had failed. He was wary of Anakin's affection for her and wanted her eliminated. Anakin and Amidala's feelings were too pure for Palpatine's taste. Yet there is never a passion that cannot be perverted. But that's a task for a later time. All would turn out right in the end. These pawns in his power play continued to move elusively, but surely in his direction.

Power. Palpatine sighed. It never comes cheap, but a Sith makes sure that the price is paid by somebody else.

He grinned and turned out the light.

End
file.